

Safetyline 112

H & S UPDATE APRIL 2010

*Check to ensure your department complies with the revised requirements for **first aid cover**. Type 2 departments with >25 workers should have a minimum of two certificated "Emergency First Aid at Work" persons, with an additional certificated person for each additional 50 workers. Type 1 departments will require at least two certificated "First Aid at Work" and an additional certificated First Aid at Work person for each additional 25 workers. I will be contacting each Department in April to ask whether your current first aid arrangements achieve this requirement.*

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If you work in an area which can be contaminated by water or other substances (e.g. oils) on the floor and which pose a **slip risk to workers** despite all control measures used, then slip-resistant footwear may be the only effective way to further reduce the risk. HSE have produced a report showing that there is an increasing number of shoes available on the market that provide a good level of slip-resistance on surfaces contaminated with water or more viscous contaminants such as glycerol. The report can be found on [www.hse.gov.uk/research](http://www.hse.gov.uk/research) titled "Monitoring the slip resistance of emerging workplace footwear" (RR780)

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*The European Risk Observatory has issued a report on the effects of **ototoxic chemicals** on hearing. Ototoxicity is chemical-induced reversible or irreversible effects that impair the senses of hearing or balance. Risk control should be based on the "precautionary principle" for "confirmed ototoxic agents" which include several pharmaceuticals, solvents (carbon disulphide, n-hexane, toluene, p-xylene, and others), carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide and its salts, several nitriles, and several metal compounds including those of lead, germanium, tin and mercury. Copies of the report "Combined exposure to noise and ototoxic substances" can be obtained from http://osha.europa.eu/en/publications/literature_reviews/combined-exposure-to-noise-and-ototoxic-substances/view*

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The **Control of Artificial Optical Radiation at Work Regulations 2010** comes into force in April. See <http://safety.dept.shef.ac.uk/ir/Artificial%20Optical%20Radiation%20Directive.pdf>

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Every year 15 to 20 people die from **carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning** in the UK and 234 suffered major injuries last year alone. HSE is launching a new campaign in parts of the UK to make parents, landlords and students aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide. Students living in digs are urged to make sure they aren't putting their lives in danger by making sure their accommodation has life-saving audible carbon monoxide (CO) alarms fitted. Landlords have a duty to have gas appliance that they own regularly serviced by a Gas Safe Register engineer and issue tenants with a copy of the gas safety certificate following the annual safety check. Contact HSE if your landlord does not, on request, provide you with a copy of the certificate. Further information can be found at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/press/2010/coi-sw-ww678sww.htm> .

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HSE have written to the University following an inspection of Containment Level 2 & 3 laboratories in the School of Medicine. Although generally satisfied with their findings, they recommended formal documented "**induction training**" for students coming into biological laboratories. A draft induction training checklist will be produced over the next few weeks for comment. When agreed the induction training should be implemented by all Departments working with biological agents.

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The next **Visual Inspection course** for portable appliances will be held on 15th April at 40 Victoria Street. Contact Bev Gouldsbrough on extn 27460 or b.gouldsbrough@sheffield.ac.uk

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The Department of Estates is removing **fire hose-reels** from within buildings as they are refurbished but in the meantime remaining hose-reels will be disconnected from the water supply and a sign placed on them stating they should not be used and that there will be sufficient fire extinguishers in the vicinity to use in the event of a fire. Fire hose-reels present a Legionella risk when used and are being phased out of the fire fighting provision for the University.

*Safety Services - working to make your University safer*